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HUMAN RESOURCES

Testimony by the Honorable Devin G. Nunes  
21<sup>st</sup> Congressional District

Dear State Assembly Member Juan Arambula:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the future transportation plans for the State of California. I applaud the work Governor Schwarzenegger and the State Legislature have done to address the problems facing our state's infrastructure needs. Indeed, I believe the Goods Movement Action Plan (GMAP) is a step in the right direction; as this plan has the potential to go a long way towards fixing many of the structural flaws that have historically prevented many areas of California from maximizing their economic potential. By realizing the GMAP's goals of job creation, relief of traffic congestion, improved air quality, improved public safety, and better overall quality of life, every region in California stands to gain.

Having said this, one simply cannot deny the fact that State Route 99 is one of California's major north-south corridors and is the lifeblood of the San Joaquin Valley economy. Unfortunately, over the course of the last half century, State Route 99 has fallen into a state of serious disrepair and is in critical need of upgrades and improvements. Failure to relieve congestion, reduce emissions, and anticipate the growth in goods movement would most certainly block future growth and development of the San Joaquin Valley. Therefore, any action as a result of the GMAP needs to have a large and substantive component that immediately addresses the critical needs of State Route 99.

I also believe it is important to note in this discussion that there are now two very recent reports - one state and one federal - that document the per capita spending disparities between the eight-county region of the southern San Joaquin Valley and the rest of California. It is readily apparent that this region has not received its "fair share" of funding for quite some time. The GMAP is a historic opportunity to mitigate this neglect and ensure a brighter economic future for the region by increasing its goods movement opportunity for years to come.

You may know that this past August, Congress made the upgrade of State Route 99 to an Interstate a top priority. More specifically, the transportation reauthorization bill (SAFETEA) made State Route 99 part of the High Priority Corridor Program, which gives it access to a substantial sum of money on a competitive basis, as well as authorized the inclusion of the road in the national interstate system. Considering this significant development and the Governor's Transportation Work Group recommendation that the state commit \$6 billion to make major upgrades to the highway, I believe the final GMAP should recognize recent Congressional action, make State Route 99 upgrades a top priority, and commit the state to working with their federal partners on achieving interstate status.

Thank you again for the hard work that you have put forth on behalf of San Joaquin Valley's roadways. I remain committed to working with you as this process continues.

  
Devin Nunes  
Member of Congress